

30 September 1954 ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

MEMORANDUM FOR: Colonel White

SUBJECT : Comments on Assistant Director for Personnel's
Staff Study on "Morale of Military Personnel"

1. Commenting upon this study is somewhat unusual, in view of the fact that it was signed and approved by General Cabell, who then apparently discovered that he was missing the necessary concurrences, and the Chief, Military Personnel Division, was then delegated to collect the autographs of the people who should have concurred before it was brought to General Cabell's attention.

2. Basically, this Staff Study is in the nature of an "omnibus bill" which lumps together many historic grievances in the military-civilian relationships within this Agency and then makes 14 specific proposals designed to alleviate them. The complaints apparently were gleaned from some 419 exit interviews of service personnel and, in part, from discussions with officers currently on duty in the Agency.

3. I believe it would be easier to treat the matter of comments by discussing the 14 individual proposals rather than through attempting to analyze the complaints and the suggestions, each separately:

a. The study recommends that prior to requesting orders for officers, they be brought in for interview, if available, and if they can come in at no expense to CIA. This certainly seems sound. Within my memory, an attempt was made to work out such an arrangement with the Air Force, but, as I recall it, the method was not widely used, since there followed considerable newspaper publicity in another context about "questionable" use of Government transportation, including "junkets" in Air Force planes.

b. This section proposes that assignments be made, when possible, from the ranks of officers who have had previous experience in, or have expressed a preference for, our type of work. Naturally, we are not anxious to accept officers who "couldn't care less" about intelligence, as such, but I am afraid that unless the "when possible" in this proposal were kept uppermost in the minds of the Military Personnel Division, we might lose the services of some excellent people who could be ruled out for simply not having expressed a preference for intelligence or because they had not had intelligence experience. Although it enjoys a better reputation

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today than in the past, the intelligence profession the services is still not so attractive that the doctrine of interest in the profession should be relied upon as an absolutely effective screening device.

c. It is proposed here that after an appropriate interval the Army again be requested to authorize the use of the regular efficiency form by civilian raters and officers of other services. The Air Force, which has always had a forward looking personnel management policy, has already agreed to this proposition; the Army is intransigent, reportedly because of objections of the present Chief of the Classifications and Standards Branch, who is due for replacement soon. Since there is such general discomfort in the military about the letter system of efficiency reporting, it would seem that this suggestion about reapproaching the Army is sound. However, the fact that the Navy has shown no signs of yielding on this point still means that we will not have a uniform system of reporting on military officers detailed to CIA. I also think that as a corollary to wider use of the military efficiency report, suitable instruction be given by memorandum or pamphlet to all civilian supervisors controlling military personnel, explaining the peculiar semantic techniques important to the military in interpreting these reports; i.e., the word "good" means one thing to a civilian but it can spell ruin to a military career if "excellent" is the lowest threshold for career advancement in that service.

d. The fourth suggestion included in the study has already been acted upon, so that any comment is historical. It was the publishing in the August issue of the Armed Forces Information Digest of a letter designed to allay the fears of officers being reported on under the above "letter method."

e. This suggestion is in the form of a draft of a memorandum for the AD/P's signature, to go to all chiefs of major components, emphasizing a need for more complete description of the officer's demonstrated qualifications, degree of his responsibility, and the level of the job he is doing. As such, it goes part of the way along the thought I suggested in c. above, since it endeavors to point out to the civilian supervisors the special requirements inherent in the entire system of reporting on military personnel as it affects their career advancement. I agree with the suggestion but think it has not gone far enough. Rather than try to expand this memorandum, I think that if and when the Army yields and allows civilians to fill out the military efficiency report,

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the Military Personnel Division might well consider drawing up a comprehensive booklet explaining the plan of efficiency reporting on the military and then illustrating differences between services in the various accepted terminologies, etc.

f. Here the suggestion is made that an interim evaluation report be obtained from the immediate supervisor of an officer, after that officer has been on duty in the Agency for four months. This is designed to alert MPD to possible personnel problems that might result in unfavorable exit interviews later on or in some mysterious or imperative "recall" of the officer to his parent service, possibly at his own instigation. This suggestion seems good and certainly is analogous to the follow-up interview system presently in use in the Office of Personnel on civilian employees, although Personnel starts as early as 30 days after the initial assignment. I am not sure how MPD arrived at four months. I would say that 60 days would be much better.

g. Since the Armed Forces Information Digest apparently means so much to officers and men, especially those detailed to other than military assignments or to remote posts, I can see no harm in effecting the widest distribution consistent with our security requirements. This is what is proposed herein, and a memorandum advocating wide distribution is tabbed to the suggestion.

h. This suggestion advocates an Agency Notice or Regulation outlining recommended procedures for the reception of new personnel. As the study points out, a Notice on this suggestion is in the mill already, though not exclusively aimed at bettering the lot of the military. In the mushroom days of 1950 and 1952, CIA was very guilty of treating new employees, including the military, like cattle when they entered on duty. Since late last year, however, Personnel has been making a solid effort to better this through orientation lectures at the time of EOD and by improving the physical reception area.

i. This is a proposal that the Comptroller automatically refer to MPD all claims involving military personnel which the Comptroller turns down. Then it goes on to hint that "some . . . (of these) could be paid by the Deputy Director (Administration)" presumably under your special powers contained in CFR [REDACTED] section 9a. This I resent, and would recommend that you do not concur in this proposal for the obvious reason that were you to do so, you would be placed in the position of being asked to second guess the Comptroller every time he issued a verdict

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which the Military Personnel Division thought was unfavorable. If the MPD can take any decision which they do not like around Mr. Saunders' end and up through the AD/P to you, it certainly undermines the Comptroller's powers which he exercises in your behalf. Under present practice, claims involving the military come to the Comptroller through MPD, so they have their chance to make their case at that time. I certainly believe MPD should be advised of the findings as a matter of courtesy, but to give them a club with which they can beat Mr. Saunders to death seems a little out of order. I think every caution should be taken to avoid having anyone in the Agency think of your powers under

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1. There is here a suggestion that overseas activities headed by civilians consider the appointment of a secretary man as a military advisor who would make them available

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to counsel military personnel in addition to his other duties. This is an outgrowth of a suggestion several months ago that there be created within the Agency a military I.G. Military Personnel Division has apparently given up on this because of the difficulty in justifying a full-time I.G. for [REDACTED] currently assigned to the Agency. The way this proposal reads, it looks very much as though what really is needed is an informal chaplain in each area where military are stationed. Certainly there can be no objection in having enlisted personnel seek advice on military problems from their own officers within the Agency, but I somehow believe that you cannot legislate the type of rapport which is needed by the officers and men for such a suggestion to be really effective. I am also concerned lest the senior military man take it upon himself to become a judge advocate on operational matters decided upon by the Senior Representative which have an effect on military. Also, I seem to have a little trouble in visualizing certain of our senior military people (Generals

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[REDACTED] acting as "personnel advisors" in addition to all the other things they have to do. Again, however, this seems to have been purchased by Mr. [REDACTED] so the objection I have is purely academic.

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m. This is a proposal that the Chief and Deputy Chief of MPD periodically visit military personnel in the larger groups in Europe and the Far East. I think this would be highly advisable.

n. The last suggestion is that our personnel orientation and our various courses for supervisors include instruction in the fundamentals of relationship. The military seemed bothered by the lack of esprit de corps in the Agency. However, I do not feel that it is incumbent upon the Agency to foster a type of fraternal spirit akin to the loyalties men feel for their military divisions or their branch of service, but I do agree that entirely too much is taken for granted when it comes to the principles of leadership. This is partially, I think, a function of the composition of this Agency. Many activities are headed by men whose intelligence competence spells the difference between a successful and unsuccessful operational or intelligence plan. This suggestion hits home with Matt Baird, who, I think, believes that there is considerable room for improvement in his management offerings and his human resources course, which, at present, are rather theoretical.

4. Summary. I think your main non-concurrence should come in connection with section 4i. which refers to the matter of the Comptroller as it affects MPD. You may wish to discuss others of the suggestions with Mr. [REDACTED] should you agree with my findings.

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